

BENEFITS OF STRETCHING DURING THE DAY

Stretching, when done properly, can benefit the body in many ways. Stretching before strenuous exercise can help to prevent injury. It can also help to improve circulation and maintain flexibility. For relaxation, it can't be beat.

Many studies have shown that appropriate stretches can improve the ability to relax. During a very busy day we often build up muscle tension which can lead to headaches, backaches, and stiff necks. Muscles need to be given relief from tension by relaxation, exercise or a change in activity. Stretching is an easy way to relieve some of those tensions.

Stretching can be done several times a day, while waiting for a bus, sitting at your desk or attending meetings. It takes very little time to break the "tension cycle".

The following are simple stretching exercises while sitting:

Take three slow deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth, then proceed.

Bend your head slowly so your ear touches the right shoulder then to the left.

Bend your head forward then all the way back.

Turn your head so your chin touches the left shoulder then turn to the right shoulder.

Stretch your arms up over your head with your fingers stretched out. Lean to the left then to the right.

Roll your shoulders forward then back five times.

Stretch your arms to the side and circle your arms forward then back five times.

Grasp your hands behind your neck and press your elbows back as far as you can. Repeat twice

Grasp your hands behind your back and straighten and lock your elbows.

Lean forward and lift your arms behind your back as high as you can. Repeat twice.

Twist at your waist; turning your upper body to the right then left. Repeat three times.

Stretch your right leg in front of you, then your left leg.

Circle your ankles three times.

Circle your wrists three times.

It is important not to "bounce" when stretching. Do not stretch to the point of pain; Only go as far as your body allows. It also helps to supplement your stretching program with regular cardiovascular exercise, relaxation and nutritious eating habits..